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Question of East Timor

Letter dated 19 January 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union on the situation in Indonesia, issued on 17 January 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 96.

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the situation in Indonesia issued on 17 January 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union has noted the historic changes of the last few months in Indonesia. It supports the efforts of the new democratically elected Indonesian Government and welcomes the steps taken by President Wahid to strengthen the country's democracy, to reform the military and judicial systems, to restore the vitality of its economy and to solve its internal conflicts through dialogue rather than force.

The European Union therefore believes that the restrictive measures taken against the previous Indonesian Government in September 1999 and which expired today, need not be renewed but notes that the European Union policy regarding arms exports will be governed by strict implementation of the European Union Code of Conduct. In this context the European Union will continue to follow closely events in Indonesia.

The European Union is deeply concerned at the appalling violence in the Moluccas, the tensions in Irian Jaya and the persisting conflict in Aceh. The European Union underlines the need to ensure accountability for past human rights abuses, particularly in East Timor, and the need to meet international concern about the fate of the tens of thousands of refugees who remain in West Timor.

On the eve of President Wahid's visit to Europe, the European Union reaffirms its support for a strong, united and democratic Indonesia and offers its help to the new Indonesian Government in overcoming these challenges in order to strengthen the ties which bind together the European Union and a democratic Indonesia.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.